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INCOMING  
TELEGRAM

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ACTION HA-05

MONTEV 02550 101931Z

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INFO DCT-01 ARA-11 ID-14 ADS-00 SSD-00 SR-04 NSCE-00  
CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 INRE-00 DODE-00 H-01  
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D R 101841Z JUL 80  
FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1707  
INFO USUN NEW YORK 0531  
USMISSION GENEVA  
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

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E. O. 12065: GDS 7/10/86 (SMITH, N. SHAW) OR/M

TAGS: ICRC, SHUM, UY

SUBJ: ICRC VISIT TO URUGUAYAN PRISONS

REFS: A) GENEVA 9476, B) MONTEVIDEO 2110, C) MONTEVIDEO 2070

1. RE QUESTIONS RAISED REF A, SOME EMBASSY WALK-IN VISITORS HAVE ALLEGED THAT ICRC INTERVIEWS WITH PRISONERS, ESPECIALLY IN LIBERTAD PRISON, WERE TAPED AND EVEN PLAYED BACK IN FRONT OF PRISONERS INVOLVED. VISITORS ALSO ALLEGE A NUMBER OF PUNITIVE BUT NOT BRUTAL MEASURES TAKEN BY PRISON AUTHORITIES IN RETALIATION FOR ICRC VISIT (REF C). EMBASSY CONTINUES TO RECEIVE A GREATER-THAN-NORMAL FLOW OF WALK-IN VISITORS.
2. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT THERE COULD NOT HAVE BEEN SYSTEMATIC TAPING OF ICRC'S INTERVIEWS, GIVEN ICRC'S REPORTED FREEDOM TO CHOOSE TIME AND PLACE OF INTERVIEWS. IT IS, HOWEVER, ENTIRELY POSSIBLE THAT PRISON AUTHORITIES WERE ABLE TO RECORD SOME FEW INTERVIEWS. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT SOME PRISON PERSONNEL, AS A FORM OF VERBAL HARASSMENT, MIGHT HAVE CLAIMED TO POSSESS RECORDINGS OF INTERVIEWS AND MIGHT HAVE RECITED SOME OF THE MORE PREDICTABLE COMPLAINTS AS EVIDENCE.
3. CHANGES IN PRISON ADMINISTRATION (REPAIR WORK IN ISOLATION CELL BLOCK, CLOSING OF BARRACKS) HAVE ALSO GENERATED COMPLAINTS. ALTHOUGH THESE CHANGES MIGHT HAVE ACTUALLY RESULTED FROM ICRC RECOMMENDATIONS, THEY ARE BEING INTERPRETED AS REPRISALS IN THE FORM OF CHANGED CELL ASSIGNMENTS AND LOUD NOISE IN THE ISOLATION CELLS ("LA ISLA"). OTHER REPORTED CHANGES MAY SIMPLY BE THE RESULT OF EFFORTS TO EFFECT ROUTINE ADMINISTRATIVE/SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS. HOWEVER, COMING ON THE HEELS OF THE ICRC'S VISIT, THESE CHANGES IN LONG-STANDING PRISON ROUTINE ALSO TAKE ON THE APPEARANCE OF REPRISALS.
4. MISSION IS SEEKING FURTHER CONFIRMATION OF MR. ISOZ' STATEMENT (PARA 4, REF A) THAT ICRC DELEGATES DID NOT VISIT RAUL SENDIC AND TEN OTHER "SPECIAL CATEGORY" PRISONERS. NOT ONLY SWISS EMBASSY OFFICIAL (REF B) BUT ALSO RANKING FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS HAD ASSURED US THAT INTERVIEWS (ALBEIT NOT PRIVATE) HAD BEEN CONDUCTED WITH THESE PRISONERS. MOREOVER, MINISTRY OFFICIALS HAD INTERPRETED HOLDING OF INTERVIEWS AS MAJOR CONCESSION ON PART OF LOCAL MILITARY AND INDICATIVE OF SEEMINGLY GREATER ACCEPTANCE ON THEIR PART OF UTILITY OF INTERNATIONAL VERIFICATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS HERE. LANE

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REASON: 25-05-2001